

CHAPTER 20

EYE/FACE WASH STATIONS

20-1. **GENERAL.** This chapter contains information about portable and plumbed eye/face wash stations.

20-2. **PURPOSE.** This chapter will cover the requirements, placement, and necessity for eye/face wash stations.

20-3. **DISCUSSION.** The Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR 1910.151, paragraph c) states the following: "Where the eyes or body of any person may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials, suitable facilities for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body shall be provided within the work area for immediate emergency use." This requirement is based on the fact that chemical burns of the eyes need **immediate** first aid attention. Any delay in treatment will generally aggravate and intensify the injury.

Initial treatment is actively flushing out the eyes with plenty of water. Irrigation should continue for a period of 20 to 30 minutes. This amount of time is usually adequate for the more serious chemicals. Though the initial flushing of the eyes or face is good, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

20-4. **EYE/FACE WASH STATIONS.** The following units can be located at the eye/wash station.

a. **Plumbed Eye/Face Wash Units.** A plumbed eye/face wash unit (see Figure 20-1, page 20-3) is a permanently installed station that has a continuous supply of water. The supply line for plumbed units will provide an uninterrupted supply of water at approximately 30 psi. When installed, the actuation valve will be operated to determine that both eyes will be washed simultaneously at a velocity low enough not to cause injury to the user. The valve shall be designed so that the water flow remains on without requiring the use of the operator's hands. The valve shall be designed to remain activated until intentionally shut off. The valve should be simple to operate and shall go from "off" to "on" in one second or less. The valve shall be resistant to corrosion from potable water. The valve actuator will be large enough to be easily located and operated by the user. Plumbed eye/face wash units will be activated weekly to flush the line and to verify proper operation.

c. **Portable Eye/Face Wash Units.** Portable eye/face wash fountains (see Figure 20-2, page 20-3) generally are units which work on a gravity-fed system (normally holding 10 to 16 gallons of water). Self-contained units will be constructed of materials that will not corrode in the presence of the flushing fluid. There should be no sharp projections anywhere in the operating area of the unit. Nozzles shall be protected from airborne contaminants. Whatever means is used to afford such protection, its removal shall not require a separate motion by the operator when activating the unit. The unit will also be large enough to provide room to allow the eyelids to be held open with the hands while the eyes are in the stream of water. There is an anti-fungus additive for portable units to extend requirement to refilling situationally according to the manufacturer recommendations.

NOTE

Every effort shall be made to install permanent eye/face fountains in all areas requiring an emergency eye/face wash capability.

No portable eye/face wash units shall be permitted in areas where a chemical splash hazard exists and where there is a continuous source of clean water available. Portable eye/face wash fountains will be allowed in remote areas when no continuous flow of freshwater is available, when the installation of a fresh water system is not economically feasible, and when the hazard of chemical splash is minimal. The only portable fountain units that will be permitted, are those delivering a flow rate of 1.5 to 2.0 gpm for a minimum of 15 minutes duration, and capable of irrigating both eyes simultaneously.

20-5. **LOCATION.** Eye/face wash units should be in accessible locations that require no more than 10 seconds to reach and should be within a travel distance no greater than 100 feet from the hazard. Specific installation instructions include that the unit be positioned about 45 inches from the floor. Each eye/face wash station shall be identified with a highly visible sign. The area around or behind, or both, the eye/face wash station will be painted a bright color and will be well lighted. If there is a specific working area that is used for only hazardous chemicals, then the wash station would be immediately adjacent to or within 10 feet.

20-6. **TRAINING.** All personnel who might be exposed to chemical splash will be instructed in the proper location and use of emergency eye/face wash stations.

20-7. **PROCUREMENT.** Order the following items by their appropriate NSN.

- Fountain, Eye and Face Wash, portable, gravity-fed, 16 gallon, green plastic (NSN 4240-01-258-1245).
- Fungicide Additive, box of four (NSN 6840-01-267-4346).
- Eyewash Location Sign (NSN 9905-01-345-4521).

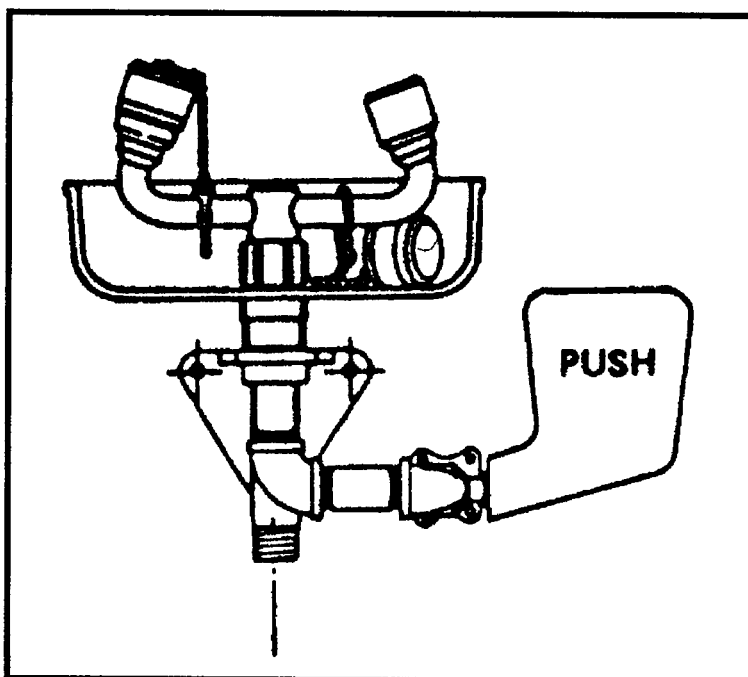


Figure 20-1. Plumbed eyeface wash unit (typical)

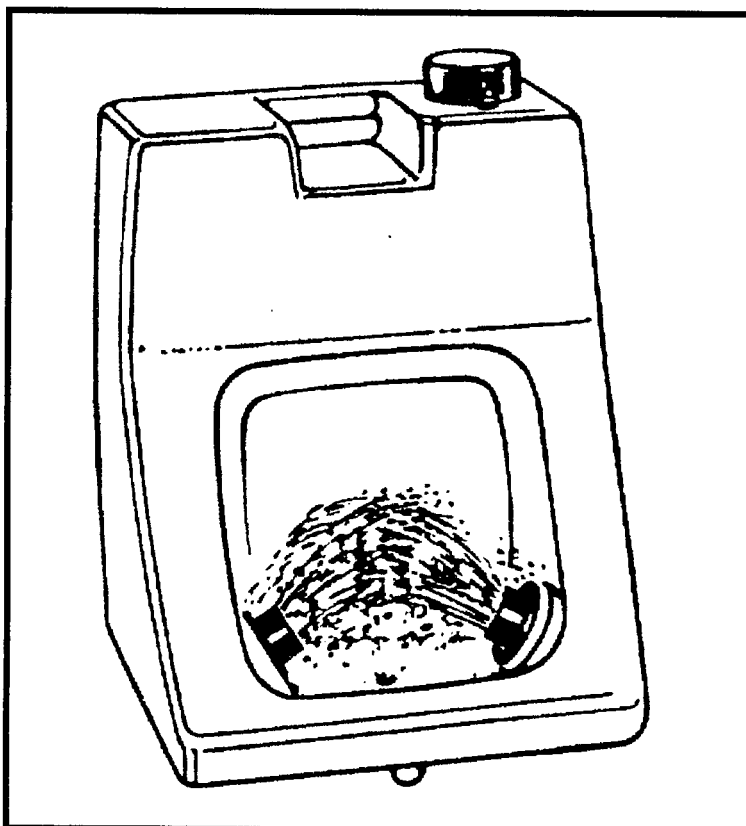


Figure 20-2. Portable eyeface wash unit